a) associating an object with said stored data;

b) deriving a unique object identifier for said object and assigning said unique object identifier to said object, wherein said unique object identifier is unique across a plurality of mass storage devices;

c) maintaining said object in a hierarchical organization with other objects, wherein said hierarchical organization comprises an object list, said object list containing said unique object identifier and other unique object identifiers for said other objects; and

d) accessing said object using said unique object identifier.

2. The method of Claim 1 wherein step b) comprises the step of using an embedded system of said mass storage device to derive and assign said unique object identifier.

3. The method of Claim 1 wherein step b) comprises the step of including in said unique object identifier a date and time corresponding to when said unique object identifier is derived such that said unique object identifier is unique to said mass storage device.

4. The method of Claim 2 wherein step b) further comprises the step of including in said unique object identifier an identification number unique to said mass storage unit such that said unique object identifier is unique for said plurality of mass storage devices.

5. The method of Claim 1 wherein step c) further comprises the step of creating a table of contents containing a list of objects associated with data stored

on said mass storage device.

14.   The method of Claim 1 wherein said mass storage device is a magnetic disk device.

15.   A mass storage unit comprising:

medium for storing data representing audio and visual content;

a head positioned adjacent to a surface of said medium such that said data are read to and written from said surface using said head; and

a microcontroller for controlling movement of said head;

wherein said microcontroller is for associating an object with said data, deriving a unique object identifier for said object, assigning said unique object identifier to said object and for accessing said object using said unique object identifier, wherein said unique object identifier is unique across a plurality of mass storage units;

wherein said microcontroller is also for maintaining said object in a hierarchical organization with other objects, said hierarchical organization including an object list containing said unique object identifier and other unique object identifiers for said other objects, said other unique object identifiers also unique across said plurality of mass storage units.

17.   The mass storage unit of Claim 16 wherein said unique object identifier includes an identification number unique to said mass storage unit such that said unique object identifier is unique for said plurality of mass storage units.

27. A mass storage unit comprising:

a storage means for storing data;

a data transfer means positioned adjacent to said storage means for reading and writing said data from and to said storage means; and

a microcontroller means for controlling movement of said data transfer means;

wherein said microcontroller means is for associating an object with said data, deriving a unique object identifier for said object, assigning said unique object identifier to said object, and accessing said object using said unique object identifier, wherein said unique object identifier is unique across a plurality of mass storage units;

wherein said microcontroller means is also for maintaining said object in a hierarchical organization with other objects, said hierarchical organization including an object list containing said unique object identifier and other unique object identifiers for said other objects, said other unique object identifiers also unique across said plurality of mass storage units.

28. The mass storage unit of Claim 27 wherein said unique object identifier includes a date and time corresponding to when said unique object identifier is derived and an identification number unique to said mass storage unit such that said unique object identifier is unique for said plurality of mass storage units.